

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 01947 271448Z

62

ACTION NEA-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 1947

LIMDIS

PASS COMMERCE FOR UNDERSECRETARY TABOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETEL, IR

SUBJ: SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT (AKA PEACE SCEPTER III OR
PEACE SWITCH)

REFS: (A) TEHRAN 10729; (B) TEHRAN 950

1. ON FEBRUARY 27 ECON COUNSELOR AND EMBOFF MET WITH
A.T. & T. VICE PRESIDENT BAIRD AND ASSOCIATES BRIGHT AND
RICKMAN TO DISCUSS GOI INVITATION TO A.T. & T. TO CONSIDER
TELECOMMUNICATIONS STUDIES. AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH
IRANIAN OFFICIALS, VISITORS SAID THEY HAD CONCLUDED GOI
INTERESTED IN TWO SEPARATE STUDIES:

A. LONG RANGE SURVEY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS REQUIRE-
MENT FOR SIXTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN BEGINNING 1978 AND PROBABLY
10-20 YEAR PERIOD THEREFXTER.

B. SHORT RANGE STUDY FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY
OF IRAN (TCI) COVERING "2M56" PROJECT. LATTER PROJECT
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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 01947 271448Z

REFERS TO INSTALLATION OF TWO MILLION LINES BY END OF

PRESENT IRANIAN FIVE YEAR PLAN IN IRANIAN YEAR 1356.
SPECIAL OFFICE CHARGED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN IS
CURRENTLY BEING ASSISTED BY FRENCH, SWEDISH AND JAPANESE
PTT GROUPS. AS FAR AS A.T. & T. OFFICIALS WERE ABLE TO
DETERMINE, TCI WOULD LIKE A.T. & T. OFFICIALS TO REVIEW AND
COMMENT ON THIS ONGOING PROJECT. STUDIES WOULD ALSO COVER SUCH
QUESTIONS AS WHETHER IRANIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SHOULD GIVE
PRIMARY RELIANCE TO SATELLITE OR TO MICROWAVE GROUND SYSTEM
OR A COMBINATION OF BOTH.

2. VISITORS INDICATED THAT IRANIS SEEMS TO BE ASSUMING
OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT. TCI DIRECTOR
SAID THAT MILITARY WOULD BE ALLOCATED CHANNELS BY HIS ORGANI-
ZATION AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MILITARY MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE ITS
OWN SATELLITE. VISITORS AGREED THAT MILITARY'S APPARENTLY SECONDARY
POSITION IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT COULD CHANGE.

3. BAIRD HAD NOT HEARD OF ROLE IN COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM FOR
NEW IRANIAN SPACE AGENCY, ALLEGEDLY HEADED BY REZA QOTBI (REF B).

4. WE DISCUSSED POLITICS AND RIVALRIES AFFECTING COMMUNICATIONS
GROUPS IN IRAN AND PROBLEMS THAT A.T. & T. WOULD CONFRONT IN TERMS
OF SKILLED MANPOWER DEFICIENCIES AND DIFFERENT OPERATING PRO-
CEDURES. BAIRD SAID THAT A.T. & T. WOULD DECIDE VERY SOON WHETHER
IT WAS IN COMPANY'S INTEREST TO UNDERTAKE STUDIES PROPOSED BY
IRANIS. IF DECISION WERE POSITIVE, THEY WOULD RETURN WITHIN
A SHORT TIME TO NEGOTIATE CONTRACT. BAIRD AND BRIGHT SAID THEY
WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH UNDERSECRETARY TABOR AND WE URGED THAT THEY
REPORT TO HIM ON THESE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. THEY AGREED TO DO SO.
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